



For Immediate Release

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CITY BREAKS GROUND FOR MT. OLIVET \$17 MILLION PROJECT

Deputy Mayor Ronald Rice and Director of Housing and Economic Development Dr. Niathan Allen joined with Mt. Olivet Baptist Church to break ground at 2 p.m. Sunday for a \$17 million community center to serve the Clinton Hill neighborhood.

The 70,000-square foot "Center of Hope" facility will be located on South 14th Street between Avon, Pierce, and Woodland Avenues. When completed in 2005, the building will enable the church to expand its existing child care center, youth and adult financial literacy program, and community resource program.

The church will also be able to create a medical center, senior day care center, schools for male and female juvenile and adult ex-offenders, and a community meeting hall.

"We are proud of Mt. Olivet Church. For 97 years, they have provided Newark in general and Clinton Hill in particular with strong moral and spiritual leadership. Mt. Olivet shows daily dedication to and faith in our community," Mayor Sharpe James said. He was unable to attend the groundbreaking as he was negotiating the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's lease of Newark Liberty International Airport. "I congratulate the Church and its family on this groundbreaking."

In addition, the building will provide space for tenants, who will be selected community service providers. The project is being overseen by Center of Hope Community Development Corporation. Mt. Olivet Baptist Church Pastor Reverend Andre W. Milteer is the president of this faith-based community development organization.

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“Our church has a 97-year history of service to our community,” Pastor Milteer said. “The Center of Hope Community Development Corporation is the church’s community service vehicle for our faith-based activities. We love Clinton Hill and its people. We believe that this new center will make our church’s second century our neighborhood’s best century.”

“This administration has a long and continuing commitment to providing the Clinton Hill neighborhood with jobs, opportunities, and a high quality of life. We have invested in the South Ward Industrial Park, the new Malcolm X Shabazz High School Athletic complex, and new housing. Working with our great partners at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, we are now moving to provide the Clinton Hill residents with first-class community services, to empower them with the tools to lead wholesome, productive lives,” James said. “I salute Mt. Olivet Baptist Church and Center of Hope Community Development Corporation as one of the great faith-based partners in Newark’s success.”